



THE BELLOWS

19th GREAT YEAR

April 15th

Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc.

Vol. XIX, No. 7

WHAT	NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF PSPCS: <u>NOTE: MEETING IS ON WEDNESDAY THIS MONTH ONLY</u>
WHERE	DES MOINES MASONIC TEMPLE 2208 S. 223rd St. (Take Midway exit #149 west off I-5..to to first stop light west of Pacific Hwy. S...turn right.)
WHEN	<u>Wednesday</u> March 15th, 1998..7:30 till 10:00 p.m. (doors open about 6:30 pm)
WHY	Short business meeting..last show report..auction (one item-lot-per member please)..door prize..Show & Tell..member trade and sell tables (free to members, please cover during business meeting). Program: <u>Ms. Maxine Nagel</u> (no relation to the Nagel camera works) will talk about one of the favorite cameras in her collection.

MEETING DATE CHANGED TO WEDNESDAY FOR THIS MONTH ONLY:

Due to the needs of the Masonic Temple PSPCS must move our meeting to Wednesday the 15th of April for this one meeting. All other meetings will be on our normal third Thursday of the month.

ITS SHOW TIME:

In only two weeks PSPCS'S 18th show will again present two hundred and seventy tables of antique and collectible photographica. Please pick up some flyers at the meeting and help spread the word. Your Show Committee, under chairman Mike Immel, has been working hard to make this our best show ever! If you would like a FREE early-in pass please sign up to help taking tickets or with off-loading parking. Remember, PSPCS presents one of the very best Camera Show and Sales in the country! Come help to keep it so.

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR:

I don't know about you but I am really looking forward to our show. Seeing old friends and trying to wheel and deal them out of some desired treasure is more fun than a litter of pups playing in a sack.

Speaking of shows: I hear that Siggi's Vancouver Show was a fun one. Prices were a bit high, but with the exchange rate things worked out OK. Lots of people and some treasures to find..just look at the smile on Jim Vilett's face.

The Portland show in March was OK I thought. Not enough buyers to make it a really good show but I bought five "treasures" and sold more then I spent. Again, it was nice to chat with the Portland club people and others. Lets hope the people putting on the show next year do a bit more advertizing for eager buyers!

If you missed last months program presentation by Jay Bender you missed a good one! Jay did a great and interesting job presenting, and talking about, his Bender View Camera. Thanks Jay. If you missed him, or want to talk further, Jay does have a table at our April 25th Show.

This Month's Mystery Question-

You probably already know that the price of silver recently took a high jump when super investor Warren Buffett bought heavily in it. Newspapers pointed out that more silver is used yearly than is being mined in the world. Just to be on the safe side, should you buy up a lot of film anticipating a great jump in price? Well, first answer this question.

How much silver is there is in a 24-exposure roll of color film? **Answer at end of Newsletter.**

****BACKSIDE INFORMATION****

March meeting came to order at 7:32 p.m. 60 members and 3 guests were present. The minutes of the February meeting were approved as read. Treasurer reported that show table money was coming in and the club was still in the black!

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Gary Sivertsen reported for Bob Kelly on our Website. Bob has created a page for members names and info. Bob Peters has created 58 links to camera collectors. Bob is eliminating links that are sales originated links. Bob Kelly reports \$300 spent to date on Website. He would like members to suggest topics for the Website.

Bill Kimber reported that everything is going smoothly for our April 25th Show. The Committee needs five more ticket takers. Gary reported that all available tables have been sold. There is a wait list ready for any late table cancellations.

NEW BUSINESS:

An announcement of the third annual Gresham Camera Swap Meet to be held at the Gresham National Armory located at 500 NE Division St. Gresham, Oregon on June 20th (Saturday) was made. Admission will be \$4.00 with early bird of \$10.00 from 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. Table prices are: Half table \$20.00..One table \$35.00..Two tables \$65.00 additional tables \$20.00 each (I am assuming 6 foot tables?) Gresham is just east of Portland off I-84. Take Wood Village exit..go south..turn right on Division..cross Burnside and armory will be on the left. Show closes at four p.m. For all information call Janet Wilcox (503) 977-7818.

PROGRAM:

Jay Bender PSPCS member from the Leavenworth area, told how he got started making 4 x 5 camera kits while still in college. He also makes 8 x 10 kits He presented a most interesting program which was very well received by the members present; which was evident by the questions and interest in the camera he brought.

SHOW & TELL:

Five members brought treasures to Show & Tell. Maxine Nagel had a most interesting find.

AUCTION:

14 items were put up for auction. Four did not sell, the other ten sold for a total of \$286.00.

DOOR PRIZES:

Door prizes were won by Tim Harrison..Kodak cup/film and Bob Osburn..Limoges like camera box.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 for more swapping, selling and nummie munching.

REMEMBER: OUR APRIL MEETING IS ON WEDNESDAY THE 15th THIS MONTH ONLY!!



THE BELLOWS Newsletter is published 9 times per year by Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc. Information for The Bellows should be sent to: Bill Kimber 1413 Weathervane Dr., Tacoma, WA 98466-5712 (253) 564-4046

The P.S.P.C.S. internet address is: <http://www.geocities.com/eureka/park/3740/>

Dues are \$10.00 per year and should be sent to Secretary/Treasurer Shirley Sparrow, 300 Pease Road, Cle Elum, WA 98922 (509) 674-1916. P.S.P.C.S. members receive first notification of our last Saturday in April yearly show.

PRESIDENT: DAVE STUDEBAKER, (253) 582-4878

The following article is from the Cascade Photographic Historical Society News Letter and is used here with much thanks. Ed.

"You Write The Title; It Does The Rest"

— Kodak Catalog, 1915

by Ben Ehrman

Now let's see. First, remove the camera's regular back and install the multi-function data back. OK. Hmmm, these buttons are too small for my fingers. Maybe I can use a pen. Where's my pen? Rats! No pen. Better check out the instruction book. Good heavens, I've seen thinner phone books! Oh well, my memory is still pretty good; maybe I can just remember when I made this photograph.

This ever happen to you? It seems that many cameras today incorporate this clever gizmo, and once you master its myriad settings, it can be a useful accessory to help document an event or aid the failing memory. Ever wonder where this little gem of an idea came from? It certainly isn't new. Here is an excerpt from Douglas Collins, *The Story of Kodak*, page 120, on Kodak's venture into "autographic photography:"

In 1913 ... [George] Eastman was visited by Henry J. Gaisman, the inventor of the autostrop razor. Gaisman, who apparently had a predilection for things automatic, sketched out for Eastman his idea for an autographic (self-recording) piece of camera equipment. Earlier Gaisman had filed for a patent on the device, and while the examiner of patents agreed that it was entirely new, the application was refused on the grounds that there seemed to be no conceivable way the invention could be made to work.

Eastman disagreed. He immediately paid Gaisman ten thousand dollars for an option on the invention and then offered him a choice of receiving either a lifetime royalty on all cameras sold that incorporated his device or a single lump-sum payment of half a million dollars, to be received after the camera was ready for the market. Gaisman apparently decided not to chance the wait and sold Eastman the invention outright for three hundred thousand dollars.

A camera that included the Gaisman invention was quickly developed, and in September 1914 the first "Autographic Kodak" was introduced. On the back of this new camera there was a small hinged door that popped open with the help of a spring. Inside the camera the usual double-thick paper on the back of the Kodak celluloid film had been replaced by a new two-layer bipack, consisting of a thin sheet of red tissue and a piece of ordinary carbon paper. When the Autographic's door, which was located along the bottom edge of the film plane, was opened, the surrounding metal frame stamped softly down on the negative, impressing a half inch wide rectangular border that ran the width of the film.

With the door open and the light shut off from the rest of the negative by the frame, the photographer wrote a short description of the picture on the back of the film. The pencil or stylus scratched the carbon paper, making it transparent. If the open door was held to the light for four or five seconds, light penetrating through the thin red paper traced a calligraphic photographic exposure along the lower edge of the negative.

The "autographic" Kodaks remained in production for about twenty years and finally disappeared when film emulsions became too fast to be exposed to light for such a relatively long period of time.

So the next time you're on vacation, and fumbling around for a pen to set the little electronic buttons, take a brief moment and reflect on the origins of this modern-day gadget that can be the cause of so much swearing.

What about Henry J. Gaisman? Hindsight would tell us that he probably should have held out for the royalties. George Eastman certainly had a knack for buying or inventing ideas that we all take for granted today. Remember the little red window? The Eastman Kodak Company made millions from Gaisman's idea. Ah well, hindsight is always 20/20, right?



Photograph of one of Eastman's "Kodak Girls" demonstrating the autographic feature. Taken from the 1915 "Kodaks and Kodak Supplies" catalog, page 2. The words, "You Write The Title; It Does The Rest," come from page 3 of this catalog.

The Wet-Plate Process

by Milan Zahorcak

In this

column we'll take a quick look at the basic steps involved in the preparation and use of wet-plate materials.

The wet collodion or wet-plate process could be used to produce three distinctively different products: the tintype, the ambrotype, or a negative to be used in contact printing onto paper. In reality, the only difference between an ambrotype and a printable negative was the length of exposure in the camera. Typically, a negative would be given five times the exposure as an ambrotype under the same circumstances — a little more than two stops, but always as an increase in exposure time, not as a larger f/stop. Aside from the individual characteristics of the surface to be used, the process was essentially the same regardless of which product the photographer was about to prepare.

1. If the photographer was preparing a tintype, he would select the blackened iron plate and examine it for defects. If he was preparing a negative or ambrotype, he would carefully clean the plate of glass (a fascinating and complicated process by itself).
2. Working under normal room light, he would pour a small pool of collodion (prepared earlier) onto the center of the plate and by hand, with careful tilting and rotation, he would attempt to completely and uniformly coat the plate without ripples or flow marks. The plate was then tipped up and the excess collodion was poured off a corner back into the storage bottle.
3. In the darkroom, working under a yellow safelight, the coated plate was placed in a tray of silver nitrate solution (prepared earlier). It took about one to two minutes to sensitize the collodion. When the plate appeared creamy yellow, it was removed from the tray, and while still wet, was placed in the plate holder.
4. In the studio, the holder, often dripping from its still wet cargo, was quickly loaded into the camera, final instructions were given to the subject (prepared earlier) and the exposure was taken. Outdoors, or under the very brightest of skylights, and given the best of circumstances, tintypes and ambrotypes (very 'thin' negatives) took about 4 - 5 seconds with the portrait lens wide open, about f/4. The ISO/ASA of this process works out to be about the same as 64 seconds at f/16 (the "sunny 16" rule), or $1/64 = \text{ISO/ASA } 0.02$. The rule of thumb for fully exposed negatives to be used for portraits or CDVs was five times longer exposure, or about 20 - 25 seconds. Indoor exposures for a negative could easily be over a minute. The plate had to remain wet, or at least damp, the entire time. Imagine this process being used by Sullivan in the 120 degree heat of Death Valley, or Jackson using 20x24 plates in the 20 below cold of Yellowstone. Amazing.

5. The plates were developed in the darkroom in pyrogallic acid, the pyro of old, for about one to two minutes until the image appeared and was the "correct" density. The plate was rinsed, then fixed in sodium thiosulfate, always known incorrectly as "hypo," for a few minutes — but usually not long enough.
6. The plate was either air-dried or heated, using various methods, until ready.
7. Ambrotypes, at this point, were ready to be cased and negatives were ready to be printed. Tintypes were typically varnished before being cased or mounted.

Mind you, what I've described is hugely oversimplified. The actual preparation and work is far, far more taxing and complicated than I have the space to discuss. What amazes me is that this process dramatically increased the number of photographers who entered into the business. Compared to the demands of the daguerreotype, the wet-plate process was vastly simpler and easier to learn, and to do well-enough to be commercially successful. Even more surprising is that there is something of a resurgence in the practice of wet-plate photography in recent years. Most of the practitioners are also Civil War re-enactors who perform their art, usually in correct period attire, in the field at various reenactments. I have the privilege of knowing a number of practicing wet-plate photographers, including Oregon's own Clovis Davis, and Bob Szebo in Virginia.

Bob has a superb home-page for those of you with web access, and samples of his work can be found at:

<http://www.cwreenactors.com/collodion/index.html>.

In addition, there is a superb quarterly, *The Collodion Journal*, produced by Mark Osterman and France Scully (sculloster@aol.com or 716 271-3361 ext. 322). Well-worth looking into if you wish to pursue the subject in more detail.

Answer to This Month's Mystery Question

With thanks to the Photographic Historical Society News Letter of March/April 1998. Ed.

According to USA TODAY, February 2, 1998, a 24 exposure roll of film has just seven-thousandths of an ounce of silver-and almost all of it is removed and recycled when the pictures are developed.

